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SOVIET UNION

1. Comment on new USSR Party Secretariat:

Malenkov's exit from the Secretariat of the Soviet Communist Party, announced on 20 March, may indicate a diminution in his power, but it is also possible that he turned over this important administrative position to trusted subordinates in order to concentrate his full efforts on policy matters.

Both Stalin and Malenkov advanced to leadership from positions in the Secretariat where they were able to control key personnel appointments and important party organizational affairs. While Stalin's title of General-Secretary was apparently dropped in 1939, the continual appearance of his name at the top of Secretariat lists since then has made the title of "first" secretary a symbol of party leadership to outside observers. Although it is surprising that Malenkov gave up this position, he may have considered that he could continue his close supervision of important party organizational matters and appointments from his top ranking post on the USSR's highest policy organ, the Party Presidium. It would seem unlikely that he could have been forced out of the very position through which his claim to the succession was established.

In the new Secretariat, Khrushchev, Shatalin and Ignatiev seem to be particularly close associates of Malenkov and the the other two members, Suslov and Pospelov, have both had a long association with him in party affairs.

FAR EAST

2. Japan to ask revision of Administrative Agreement with US:

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Japan intends to request revision of the Administrative Agreement with the United States after it becomes a year old on 28 April. The Foreign

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Office has hinted that changes will involve the articles which grant the US criminal jurisdiction over its forces in Japan and those concerned with "rent free" facilities now being used by the American forces for the Korean war.

Comment: Such a request would probably be designed to strengthen Japan's position in negotiating similar provisions in the United Nations Forces Agreement, and at the same time could be used during the current election campaign to refute charges that the present government is subservient to the United States.

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SOUTH ASIA

4. China seeking renegotiation of treaty between Nepal and Tibet:

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Communist China is still pressing for the establishment of diplomatic relations with Nepal and is now seeking renegotiation of the Nepalese-Tibetan treaty, according to Ambassador Bowles in New Delhi.

Comment: On 17 February the Nepalese Foreign Secretary stated that twice recently the Chinese commanding general in Lhasa had approached the Nepalese representative and suggested treaty revision.

The question of diplomatic relations and treaty revision has arisen periodically since 1951. As recently as 7 March, however, a Tibetan delegation arrived in Kathmandu bearing the traditional annual tribute to the King of Nepal, thereby suggesting that the Chinese are not yet ready to force an issue with that country.

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WESTERN EUROPE

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6. Chancellor Figl reportedly dropped in efforts to form Austrian Government:

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Foreign Minister Gruber has informed the American Embassy in Vienna that the People's Party has decided to replace Chancellor Figl with Party Chairman Julius Raab in deference to demands from the members for "stronger leadership."

Ambassador Thompson is hopeful that negotiations next week between the People's Party and the Socialists on the formation of a new government will be successful, but he warns that a "most dangerous situation" will result if either party now increases its demands.

Comment: People's Party leaders probably feel that Raab, a former Heimwehr (Fascist) leader and head of the industrialist element of the party, would be better able to cope with the Socialists in a two-party coalition. It is also probable that he will be far more willing than Figl to turn to the right extremists as coalition partners should Socialist demands appear "excessive."

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